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International Court of Justice

H0920-0002

OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT OF TESTIMONY FOR THE DEFENSE OF ORGANIZATIONS, TAKEN BEFORE A COMMISSION APPOINTED BY THE INTERNATIONAL MILITARY TRIBUNAL PURSUANT TO PARAGRAPH 4 OF THE ORDER OF THE TRIBUNAL DATED 13 MARCH 1946.

FRIDAY, 24 MAY 1946

COMMISSIONERS:

CAPTAIN JOSEPH TUBRIDY
M. MARTIN-HAVARD

THE GESTAPO

(The commission convened at 1430 hours).

WILHELM GRUENEWALD, a witness, took the stand and testified as follows:

BY CAPTAIN TUBRIDY:

Q Will you give your full name, please.

A Wilhelm Gruenewald.

Q Will you raise your right hand and repeat after me: I swear by God, the Almight and Omniscient, that I will speak the pure truth and will withhold and add nothing.

(The witness repeated the oath).

DIRECT EXAMINATION

BY DR. HEIM:

Q Were you a member of the Security Police?

A Yes.

Q What was your career with the Security Police?

A I entered the criminal police section of the Police Wuppertal in 1935 as a training and criminal investigator, as a candidate criminal investigator. In 1937 I was a criminal commissioner and was active in the criminal depart-

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ments of Wuppertal, Halle and Berlin. In 1940 I was temporarily sent to the Reich criminal division and later on was sent as leading candidate -- I was sent as leading candidate to the chief of the SD Security Police of"Amt I."

During that time I also was sent for three months to the concentration camp of Buchenwald.

BY COLONEL GRIFFITH JONES:

Q The date of that?

A August, September and October 1942, I do not know exactly. At the end of August 1943 I made the second judicial test, distinct test, before the permanent -- before the Board of Examination of the Ministry of the Interior. After that I was sent as a personal representative to the inspector of the Security Police and SD in Braunschweig.

Q The date?

A 1st of September, 1943.

BY DR. HEIM:

Q As you said before, yourself, you were sent temporarily to the concentration camp Buchenwald for three months, 1942. How did your temporary assignment to Buchenwald come about?

A My main base continued to be the criminal section inBerlin of "Amt I" under which I was guardian training. I was transferred to "Amt VI" and was transferred to a section which had the code name Zeppelin.

Q In what capacity did that transfer take place?

A I was the assistant to one of the chiefs of this

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code Zeppelin which was working in concentration camp Buchenwald.

Q Did you know for what reason you were transferred to "Amt VI"?

A First I only knew that I was to be transferred to group Zeppelin and that this group was working with the Russians.

Q When did you find out further details concerning this so called action Zeppelin?

A The day I started to work. I found out that the job of the commission and the Action Zeppelin was to get volunteer Russians to work as communications men, as information men, behind the Russian lines.

Q At that time did you read the written order or see the written order concerning Action Zeppelin?

A No. I saw nothing written about it.

Q What was the duty of the Commission in the concentration camp Buchenwald?

A We gave the Russian prisoners of war a first test in screening as to whether or not they would be suitable to our work.

Q How did these Russians at that time get to the concentration camp Buchenwald?

A Action Zeppelin had sent small commissions to the various PW camps. It was the job of these commissions to get a first impression through questioning and ob-

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servation of these prisoners. If these prisoners seemed suitable it was suggested to them that they fight on the side of the Germans against Bolshevism. Many prisoners of war declined because it seemed too dangerous for them to fight against Russia because they were afraid they would be captured by the Russians. When they were told that it only concerned information, they at times considered it less dangerous and they were ready to fight on our side against Bolshevism. Those prisoners then were sent to Buchenwald.

Q How large was the number of prisoners of war which were under you as assistant chief of this commission?

A During this three months, that is, during my term, more than 1,000 men went through that commission in Buchenwald.

Q Did the Wehrmacht know anything about the Group Zeppelin?

A As far as I know there had been an agreement between the chief of the German prisoner of war system and the leader of "Amt VI". The chiefs of the prisoner of war camps were told about this from their superior officers that the Group Zeppelin wanted to be active or intended to be active in that particular camp.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: May I ask the defense counsel what the purpose of this examination is?

DR. HEIM: I want to bring out that the Russians who were brought to Buchenwald were not brought there for

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reasons to be executed but that they were brought there for use by this commission, this Group Zeppelin.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: Well, I should think he would do that with more direct questioning and with fewer questions.

DR. HEIM: These questions to disprove the charges by the Prosecution against the Gestapo are very important.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: All right. Let me ask ~~you~~ the witness how many Russians were brought to Buchenwald for this purpose.

DR. HEIM: The witness declared before that 1,000 Russians went to him at the ~~xx~~ time that he was at the concentration camp.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: Does that mean 1,000 Russians came ~~from~~ to Buchenwald for this purpose?

DR. HEIM: No. I want to say that at the time he was there 1,000 Russians were under him. There was a continuous coming and going but on the average around 1,000 Russians were there all the time.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: See if ~~he~~ we can ask the witness just this one direct question: Does he know how many Russians went to Buchenwald ~~for being~~ to be interviewed by this Action Zeppelin?

BY DR. HEIM:

Q How many Russians were brought all together to Buchenwald for this Action Zeppelin?

COLONEL KAREN: What ~~xxx~~ does the number of prisoners of war have to do with this question?

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: ~~That was~~ This is my question, Col. Karen.

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THE WITNESS: The total number of prisoners of war that came to Buchenwald I cannot give exact information. After I was ordered away from that place I did not have any further information or insight into this situation.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: I should like to ask ~~Put~~ this question ~~to him~~: During the period of time that he was at Buchenwald ~~xx~~ engaged in this Action Zeppelin, how many ~~xxxxxxxx~~ Russians were ~~xxxx~~ brought there for the purpose of being interviewed? By Action Zeppelin?

THE WITNESS: I gave this number to be between 1,500 and 1,800 Russians.

~~xyxd~~

BY DR. HEIM:

Q How long did the Action Zeppelin take?

A As far as I know Action Zeppelin continued until the capitulation.

Q At the time you were in Buchenwald how were these Russians treated in Buchenwald?

A The Russians were in the protection camp itself but were treated and fed by German soldiers. They did not have to work, and we very often went with those Russians in front of the camp to indulge in sports. At times we also used them for voluntary work far from the camp. No cases of escape happened while I was there. If the Russians were found suitable for the duties of Group Zeppelin they were ~~x~~ sent to further training camps which were about the same as

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German billets, barracks. Prisoners that were not suitable were sent to out in the country to farms. Maybe also they were used for the German industry but I do not know that. Or to military units.

Q Were these unsuitable Russians sent from Buchenwald to these various places you have mentioned as prisoners of war or as civilians?

A No, they were released from prisoner of war status and were ~~x~~ regarded as civilians.

Q Do you know for sure that the Russians who were regarded suitable for this Action Zeppelin while you were there were not trained for executions?

A Yes.

Q Was this fact known to the personnel of the camp and also to the Russians who came in contact with these Russian prisoners?

A The personnel of the prisoner of war camps did not receive detailed information about our action. The Russians who were declared suitable had to keep quiet about it.

Q Do you know or did you hear of any rumors which stated that the Russians who were declared suitable were later on executed?

A Regarding the large number of Russians and the uncertainty of their future, I would say that that was possible.

Q Did you use certain racial groups of the Russian army such as the Asiatic races, for this action?

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A At my time mostly Mongolians and Asiatic types were selected because we thought that, in short, we would reach areas which were inhabited by these people. At that time we were not too much interested in White Russians.

Q Did you make any special consideration of the Russian intelligence -- intelligence of the person?

A Yes. The nature of the work required a person of a certain intelligence, so among the people of the Group Zeppelin there were soldiers from the rank of private to general.

Q How did the commissions work which were in these Russian prisoner of war camps to make these selections?

A There were small commissions which were not tied to a certain camp but visited various camps.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: May I ask the purpose of this questioning?

DR. HEIM: The Prosecution present a sworn statement by Kurt Lindow, l-i-n-d-o-w, number P. S. 2542, this exhibit U. S. A. 482, second part of the document book.

~~COLONEL GRIFFITH JONES: May I ask the number again?~~

~~THE INTERPRETER: P. S. 2542, U. S. 482, second part of the document book.~~

BY DR. HEIM:

Q Page 1730 of the German protocol, paragraph 4 of the sworn affidavit of Kurt Lindow, says the following, and I quote:

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(Dr. Heim reads).

COLONEL KAREV: He is going too fast. I cannot understand.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: Will ~~you ask him to~~ DR. HEIM speak more slowly.

DR. HEIM: "There exists in the PW camps on the eastern front small screening teams headed by lower ranking member of the Secret ~~Police~~ Police, Police Gestapo. These teams were assigned to the camp commanders and had the job to segregate the PWs who were candidates for execution according to the orders that had been given and to report them to office of the Secret Police. For that reason -- "

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: Just a minute. This has to do with the eastern front?

DR. HEIM: Only with the eastern front.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: Was this witness on the eastern front?

THE WITNESS: Yes. I was.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: Will you give the period of time that he was there?

THE WITNESS: August, September, to the middle of October, 1941.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: A period of 2½ months?

THE WITNESS: Yes.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: What was his position there?

THE WITNESS: At that time I was SS"obersturmbann-

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fuehrer in the ~~XXXs~~"Einsatzkommando" or Team 12.

DR. HEIM: I believe that the question which the Court just asked presents a wrong picture. This witness did not have anything to do with these commandos or units when he was on the eastern front in 1941, but I believe that the witness knows about this as far as it is concerned that he had the Action Zeppelin under him in Buchenwald.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: ~~Can we get on with the examination of this witness?~~ I merely wanted to find how much knowledge the witness had on the basis of his background, basis of his position, ~~on the basis~~ of the paragraph which has just been read.

DR. HEIM: The witness knew about this since he was assistant chief of the Action Zeppelin.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: Can we get on with the questions?

BY DR. HEIM:

Q How did these commissions look that were active in the prisoner of war camps in the east?

A They were not groups but they were commissions that did not have a permanent spot, camp, but visited various camps. It consisted of members of the Gestapo or secret police, criminal police, or the SD, depending on how they were sent to "Amt VI."

Q Since the Prosecution claims that these units selected people especially of Asiatic background for execu-

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tions, to support them and then to execute them, I would like to ask whether the Russians that were in those camps with Asiatic or Mongolian background were treated differently from thhose from t he other parts of Russia?

A No. They were treated exactly the same as the other members of the Action Zeppelin.

Q Did it also happen that Russians who were selected for this decided not to go through with it during their training, and what happened to them?

A The Russians were told that their cooperation was completely voluntary and they had the possibility at any time to retire. When they did retire they usually were sent to military units or used otherwise for work -- given work positions.

Q Did you ever hear anything of the "Kugelorder"?

A Yes. I know of that order, with the exception of paragraph 3 which I cannot remember.

Q Do you think or find it possible that persons selected for Action Zeppelin were regarded as such, which accordng to the "Kugelorder" were scheduled to be executed?

A I did not have any experience concerning this. By time of the "Kugelorder" in 1944 the Action Zeppelin was still existing.

Q Do you find it possible that the small teams or "Einsatzkommandos" mentioned by Kurt Lindow in his sworn affidavit, that he considered these small teams for the Action Zeppelin as such execution teams?

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A Yes. I think that is very possible. The men of the Action Zeppelin acted in about the same way as described in the sworn affidavit of Lindow, and in addition to that, even in the Reich, there was difference of opinion, even in the country, in the Reich, as to what belonged to the Gestapo and what did not, because all members of the Reich Security Service wore the same uniforms and same insignias. I was often regarded by the Russians in the prisoner of war camp as a Gestapo man and I had to right their opinions or change their opinions. After I read the indictment I asked many friends or comrades whether they knew about it, that Russian prisoners of war of certain racial groups or higher intelligence were selected to be executed. None of my comrades could give me an exact answer to this question. Many heard something about it but nobody knew anything certain. Concerning the fact that intelligent people were executed, nobody knew anything.

COLONEL GRIFFITH JONES: Nobody would what?

THE INTERPRETER: Nobody knew anything.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: Is that "intelligence" or "intelligent"?

THE INTERPRETER: "Intelligent." "t."

THE WITNESS: I personally have not found any witnesses for that. I always thought that due to my experience with Action Zeppelin I had better information about it or knew more about it and therefore granted those rumors to be parlor stories.

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BY DR. HEIM:

Q The Prosecution presented a document here, P. S. 3040, Exhibit U. S. A. 207. On page 43 concerning treatment of Russian prisoners of war --

COLONEL GRIFFITH JONES: In what book? Is it a decree?

DR. HEIM: Yes, is an order of the High Command of the Army of the 24th of March 1942. Here it says in paragraph 9:

"For the separation of the Soviet prisoners of war and the civil population in these camps the following lines to be followed in addition to the separation according to nationality. Special to select are: Political unwanted officers; political not dangerous; and political especially dependable that can be used for the rebuilding of the occupied territories; while as far as possible the first separations according to number 9 should be taken care of by the camps, by the individual camps. There are special units for the separation of Soviet prisoners of war -- "

COLONEL GRIFFITH JONES: I have another one, a different document, and I think the wording is probably better.

DR. HEIM: "While this first separation concerning their political inclination, special "Einsatzkommandos" or teams have been created by the Security Police and Security Service, they are under the Chief of the Security Police and the SD, immediately under the Secret Police and the SD, and

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have been specially schooled for this special mission. They take their actions and -- their actions and questioning before these Russians are used in connection with the work or under the lines, guiding lines, of the Chief of the Security Police and the SD."

THE INTERPRETER: Will you read it back.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: I think it is all right.

BY DR. HEIM:

Q I have concerning this document the following question: Could it be that the separation of Soviet prisoners of war mentioned in this document concerning the Action Zeppelin --

A I cannot say anything concerning it. I never saw a written order which concerned Action Zeppelin specifically.

M. MONNERAY: As far as I know, up to now the Prosecution has not brought any charge against this Zeppelin Action, and even in the documents presented by the Prosecution , as far as I know, at least, it is not talking at all about this Zeppelin Action. So I wonder whether they could tell anything interesting on this point, whether the questions put by the defense counsel are relevant .

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: As to his last question I think the witness has indicated that he cannot connect the written -- was that a decree?

THE INTERPRETER: Yes.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: With the Action Zeppelin. If

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he has no knowledge I don't see how you can pursue this matter further.

DR. HEIM: In the documents concerning this separation the reasons for the separation have not been given. Therefore it is not only the possibility but the probability that these orders concerning the separation of prisoners were at least partly concerning this Action Zeppelin.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: I think the witness has indicated that he doesn't know whether this Action Zeppelin was connected with this decree.

DR. HEIM: But the witness did say that Kurt Lindow did mistake these special teams with the teams of Action Zeppelin.

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M. MONNERAY: I do not think that Lindow in his affidavit talked about XX the Zeppelin Action at all.

DR. HEIM: But MXXXXXX we never claimed that. But Lindow speaks concerning the separation and the witness also speaks concerning the separation; and the witness also speaks of a separation unit which seems to be the same thing as Lindow described in his sworn affidavit.

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CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: The witness has indicated he does not know that his work was connected with that field.

DR. HEIM: The Prosecution states that these separations were only for the purpose of executions, or to select persons for execution, because he previously read document exhibit No. USA 207, and I have mentioned the reason for these separations. It is, therefore, possible that the Prosecution connects these separations with executions. What was the last question.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: All right, let's have the last question.

BY DR. HEIM:

Q Did the Gestapo, that is, Amt IV of the Reich Security Office, have anything to do with the "Actions Zeppelin"?

A The only connection which Amt IV of the Gestapo had with this "Actions Zeppelin" sofar as I know is that some of the men of the Amt IV Gestapo were transferred through Amt I and Amt VI (Actions Zeppelin). That is sofar as I know the only connection.

DR. HEIM: Thank you very much.

COLONEL GRIFFITH JONES: I just want to clear up the confusion between your Zeppelin operation and the Einsatz commander.

~~BY COLONEL GRIFFITH JONES~~:

CROSS EXAMINATION

BY COLONEL GRIFFITH JONES:

Q Your "Zeppelin Action" was an operation which was organized by Amt VI is that correct?

A Yes.

Q Did you know that operation of Einsatz commanders, about which Lindow spoke, was organized by Amt IV?

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A No, I did not know that.

Q Have you ever seen Lindow's affidavit?

A I only saw part of it. Shall I continue.

Q No. The fact that one operation is organized by Amt VI, and the other operation by Amt IV, make it perfectly clear there were two separate operations. Is that so?

A I do not know how Lindow knew that those commissions, which were in the camps -- in the prisoner war camps, were organized by Amt IV.

Q Will you ask the witness to answer my question. The fact that the two operations were organized, which were completely separate departments of the RSHA, make it quite clear they were two independent operations, does it not?

A I can not give any information about these. I only know the action accrued by Amt VI.

Q And Amt VI action had nothing to do with the screening of persons who were to be executed straight away?

A Yes, it had to do with the screening of persons, but not for screening of persons that were to be executed.

Q Have you ever been shown an order issued from Amt IV, and dated 17 July 1941, an order on the work which was to be carried out by Einsatz commanders in prisoner of war camps?

A I did not see this order, neither through my tour of duty, nor during my imprisonment.

Q From this Document PS-502 USA 486, I will read to you two passages: "It is the tasks of the commandos to investigate politically all inmates of the camp, their elimination and to give further treatment to the politically criminally, or in any other respect undesirable elements among them, all of

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those persons who could have utilized for the reconstruction of the occupied territories." Your Zeppelin groups never had any orders of that kind, did they?

A No, I did not see this order.

Q I read again,"Above all, the following must be discovered: All important functionaries of the State and the Party, especially professional revolutionists, functionaries of the Komintern, all authoritative party functionaries of the KPDSU, and its affiliated organizations, etc., all peoples-commissars and their deputies, all former political-commissars in the Red Army, the leading personalities of the central and middle regions, the leading personalities of the economic world, members of the Soviet-Russian intelligence,and all Jews." Did your Zeppelin groups ever have any orders like that; tell us what the Zeppelin groups had?

A Sofar as I know, no.

Q You have heard read paragraph 4 of Lindow's affidavit?

A I do not know that paragraph.

Q I think it was read, and I believe it is part of the affidavit. I shall read paragraph 4 of Lindow's affidavit.

DR. HEIM: I read this paragraph.

BY COLONEL GRIFFITH JONES:

Q You heard the defense counsel say he read the paragraph from that affidavit.

A If the defense counsel read it, I heard it, yes.

Q Would you agree with me that the orders which were read to you are the same - or appears to be exactly the same as those which Lindow is describing?

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A If that is Lindow's statement, yes. May I add something to that? What I know of Lindow's statement is as follows:

Q No. You heard the thing read,and you have agreed with me that what I have read to you out of the orders appeared to be the same as those that Lindow is describing. In view of the fact that the orders I read emanated from Amt IV,and the orders Lindow referred to emanated from Amt IV, do you agree with me that he must have been referring to this order that I have read?

A (The Interpreter: Will you read that question)

Q In ivew of the fact that both the orders I have read, and the order that Lindow referred to emanated from Amt IV, and the fact that both orders appeared to be the same at that time; would you agree with me that neither of them had anything to do with the Zeppelin operations that we have been describing?

A After the way this order read, yes.

Q And you will agree with me, therefore, that Lindow was describing ~~the~~ some operation other than your Zeppelin operation?

A If Lindow said that the political independent and criminals were selected, then I agree with him.

DR. HEIM: That is all.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: Any questions to be asked? ~~by any of you.~~

COLONEL KAREN: I have.

BY COLONEL KAREN:

Q Was the witness only in the concentration camp of Buchenwald, or also other camps. If, ~~yes~~ so, where and when?

A I was about two or three months before that for a short leadership of a few hours in the concentration camp in Oranienburg.

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Q Does the witness know how the prisoners of war were treated in these camps, and about the orders concerning the treatment of these prisoners?

A I saw prisoners of war in these camps, they were Russian prisoners of war. These prisoners came from, sofar as I was told, from other prisoner of war camps, and were supposed to be nourished well for the purposes of using them later on as good workers. The orders of the prisoners of war camps concerning the treatment of the prisoners of war in those particular camps are not known to me.

Q (question in German)

A I did not understand the question.

Q Do you know only of the treatment of these Russian prisoners of war by the Gestapo that were selected for this secret work, or, do you know of the treatment by the Gestapo of the Russian prisoners of war that were not selected for the job, or, were just prisoners of war?

A In this case that we are speaking of now I only saw prisoners of war. Besides that I did not see any Gestapo agents in those camps with the exception of ourselves, who came there with that function.

COLONEL KAREN: If the witness can only talk or give information about the Russian prisoners that were selected only for espoinage work, the Colonel does not have any further questions.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: There are no further questions?

DR. HEIMS: I have, sir.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: How many questions have you?

DR. HEIM: Only one question.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: Very well.

BY DR. HEIM:

Q Could Lindow say in the sworn affidavit at paragraph 4, or didn't he say that these commandos belonged to Amt IV of the Reich Security Ser-

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vice,but that they were loaned by members of the Secret Police Gestapo, therefore, if the Prosecution claims that Kurt Lindow was speaking of the Einsatz commandos of the units of Amt IV, so that that in my opinion is incorrect. I would like, therefore, to ask if these units of commandos named by Kurt Lindow, that they were mistaken by Kurt Lindow with the Einsatz commandos"action Zeppelin."

A If Kurt Lindow can not give more detailed information about these units, about this commission, I'll have to answer this question with, yes.

DR. HEIM: That is all.

COLONEL GRIFFITH JONES: I can not with your permission leave the matter there. The defense counsel knows perfectly well, if he has read the affidavit of Lindow, that in every preceding paragraph to paragraph 4, and paragraph 4 of the RSHA, and the very last sentence of paragraph 3,that is to say, the sentence immediately preceding ~~the giving of~~ paragraph 4 reading as follows: "The work concerning Russian prisoners of war must then have been done by Amt IVb 2A; head of Department Amt IVb 2A was Reg. troop and Sturmbannfuehrer Hans Helmuit Wolf," and the affidavit immediately goes on and says,"There existed in the prisoner of war camps on the Eastern front small screening teams," and so on.

DR. HEIM: That in my opinion is purely a matter of view. The commissions that were active for "Actions Zeppelin" were not under Amt IV, but Amt VI,and these commissions were, as the witness has said, men of the criminal section of the Gestapo, as well as of the SD.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: That is all for this witness. ~~Take a recess.~~

~~(recess)~~

(a recess was taken)

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The foregoing is a true and correct transcript of the testimony of Wilhelm Gruenwald, taken on 24 May 1946.

Howard B Darrow
Reporter (pp 1-15)

Charles J Gallagher
Reporter (pp 16-21)

Reporter (pp)

CERTIFIED TO:

Joseph F Tubridy
Commissioner

[signature]
Commissioner

A. MARTIN-HARVAY

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OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT OF TESTIMONY FOR THE DEFENSE OF ORGANIZATIONS, TAKEN BEFORE A COMMISSION APPOINTED BY THE INTERNATIONAL MILITARY TRIBUNAL PURSUANT TO PARAGRAPH 4 OF THE ORDER OF THE TRIBUNAL DATED 13 MARCH 1946.

FRIDAY, 24 MAY 1946

COMMISSIONERS:

CAPTAIN JOSEPH TUBRIDY
M. MARTIN-HAVARD

THE GESTAPO

(The commission convened at 1430 hours).

WILHELM GRUENEWALD, a witness, took the stand and testified as follows:

BY CAPTAIN TUBRIDY:

Q Will you give your full name, please.

A Wilhelm Gruenewald.

Q Will you raise your right hand and repeat after me: I swear by God, the Almighty and Omniscient, that I will speak the pure truth and will withhold and add nothing.

(The witness repeated the oath).

DIRECT EXAMINATION

BY DR. HEIM:

Q Were you a member of the Security Police?

A Yes.

Q What was your career with the Security Police?

A I entered the criminal police section of the Police Wuppertal in 1935 as a training criminal investigator, as a candidate criminal investigator. In 1937 I was a criminal commissioner and was active in the criminal departments of Wuppertal, Halle and Berlin. In 1940 I was temporarily sent to the Reich criminal division and later on was sent as leading candicate -- I was sent as leading candidate to the chief of the SD Security Police of Amt I

During that time I also was sent for three months to the concentration camp of Buchenwald.

BY COLONEL GRIFFITH JONES:

Q The date of that?

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A August, September and October 1942, I do not know exactly. At the end of August 1943, I made the second judicial test, distinct test, before the permanent -- before the Board of Examination of the Ministry of the Interior. After that I was sent as a personal representative to the inspector of the Security Polic and SD in Braunschweig.

Q The date?

A 1st of September, 1943.

BY DR. HEIM:

Q As you said before, yourself, you were sent temporaril to the concentration camp Buchenwald for three months, 1942. How did your temporary assignment to Buchenwald come about?

A My main base continued to be the criminal section in Berlin of "Amt I" under which I was guardian training. I was transferred to "Amt VI" and was transferred to a section which had the code name Zeppelin.

Q In what capacity did that transfer take place?

A I was the assistant to one of the chiefs of this code Zeppelin which was working in concentration camp Buchenwald.

Q Did you know for what reason you were transferred to "Amt VI"?

A First I only knew that I was to be transferred to group Zeppelin and that this group was working with the Russians.

Q When did you find out further details concerning this so called action Zeppelin?

A The day I started to work. I found out that the job of the commission and the Action Zeppelin was to get volunteer Russians to work as communications men, as information men, behind the Russian lines.

Q At that time did you read the written order or see the written order concerning Action Zeppelin?

A No. I saw nothing written about it.

Q What was the duty of the Commission in the concentration camp Buchenwald?

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A We gave the Russian prisoners of war a first test in screening as to whether or not they would be suitable to our work.

Q How did these Russians at that time get to the concentration camp Buchenwald?

A Action Zeppelin had sent small commissions to the various PW camps. It was the job of these commissions to get a first impression through questioning and ob-

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servation of these prisoners. If these prisoners seemed suitable it was suggested to them that they fight on the side of the Germans against Bolshevism. Many prisoners of war declined because it seemed too dangerous for them to fight against Russia because they were afraid they would be captured by the Russians. When they were told that it only concerned informationm they at times considered it less dangerous and they were ready to fight on our side against Bolshevism. Those prisoners then were sent to Buchenwald.

Q How large was the number of prisoners of war which were under you as assistant chief of this commission?

A During this three months, that is, during my term, more than 1,000 men went through that commission in Buchenwald.

Q Did the Wehrmacht know anything about the Group Zeppelin?

A As far as I know there had been an agreement between the chief of the German prisoner of war system and the leader of "AmtVI". The chiefs of the prisoner of war camps were told about this from their superior officers that the Group Zeppelin wanted to be active or intended to be active in that particular camp.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: May I ask the defense counsel what the purpose of this examination is?

DR. HEIM: I want to bring out that the Russians who were brought to Buchenwald were not brought there for reasons to be executed but that they were brought there for use by this commissionm this Group Zeppelin.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: Well, I should think he would do that with more direct questioning and with fewer questions.

DR. HEIM: These questions to disprove the charges by the Prosecution against the Gestapo are very important.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: All right. Let me ask the witness how many Russians were brought to Buchenwald for this purpose.

DR. HEIM: The witness declared before that 1,000 Russians went to him at the time that he was at the concentration camp.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: Does that mean 1,000 Russians came to Buchenwald for this purpose?

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DR. HEIM: No. I want to say that at the time he was there 1,000 Russians were under him. There was a continuous coming and going but on the average around 1,000 Russians were there all the time.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: See if we can ask the witness this one direct question; Does he know how many Russians went to Buchenwald to be interviewed by this Action Zeppelin?

BY DR. HEIM:

Q How many Russians were brought all together to Buchenwald for this Action Zeppelin?

COLONEL KAREN: What does the number of prisoners of war have to do with this question?

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: This is my question, Colonel Karen.

THE WITNESS: The total number of prisoners of war that came to Buchenwald I cannot give exact information. After I was ordered away from that place I did not have any further information or insight into this situation.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: I should like to ask this question : During the period of time that he was at Buchenwald engaged in this Action Zeppelin, how many Russians were brought there for the purpose of being interviewed? By Action Zeppelin?

THE WITNESS: I gave this number to be between 1,500 and 1,800 Russians.

BY DR. HEIM:

Q How long did the Action Zeppelin take?

A As far as I know Action Zeppelin continued until the capitulation.

Q At the time you were in Buchenwald how were these Russians treated in Buchenwald?

A The Russians were in the protection camp itself but were treated and fed by German soldiers. They did not have to work, and we very often went with these Russians in front of the camp to indulge in sports. At times we also used them for voluntary work far from the camp. No cases of escape happened while I was there. If the Russians were found suitable for the duties of Group Zeppelin they were sent to further training camps which were about the same as

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German billets, barracks. Prisoners that were not suitable were sent out in the country to farms. Maybe also they were used for the German industry but I do not know that. Or to military units.

Q Were these unsuitable Russians sent from Buchenwald to these various places you have mentioned as prisoners of war or as civilians?

A No, they were released from prisoner of war status and were regarded as civilians.

Q Do you know for sure that the Russians who were regarded suitable for this Action Zeppelin while you were there were not trained for executions?

A Yes.

Q Was this fact known to the personnel of the camp and also to the Russians who came in contact with these Russian prisoners?

A The personnel of the prisoner of war camps did not receive detailed information about our action. The Russians who were declared suitable had to keep quiet about it.

Q Do you know or did you hear of any rumors which stated that the Russians who were declared suitable were later on executed?

A Regarding the large number of Russians and the uncertainty of their future, I would say that that was possible.

Q Did you use certain racial groups of the Russian army such as the Asiatic races, for this action?

A At my time mostly Mongolians and Asiatic types were selected because we thought that, in short, we would reach areas which were inhabited by these people. At that time we were not too much interested in White Russians.

Q Did you make any special consideration of the Russian intelligence -- intelligence of the person?

A Yes. The nature of the work required a person of a certain intelligence, so among the people of the Group Zeppelin there were soldiers from the rank of private to general.

Q How did the commissions work which were in these Russian prisoner of war camps to make these selections?

A There were small commissions which were not tied to a certain camp but visited various camps.

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CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: May I ask the purpose of this questioning?

DR. HEIM: The Prosecution present a sworn statement by Kurt Lindow, l-i-n-d-o-w, number P.S. 2542, this exhibit U.S.A. 482, second part of the document book.

BY DR. HEIM:

Q Page 1730 of the German protocol, paragraph 4 of the sworn affidavit of Kurt Lindow, says the following, and I quote:

(Dr. Heim reads).

COLONEL KAREV: He is going too fast. I cannot understand.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: Will Dr. Heim speak more slowly.

DR. HEIM: "There exists in the PW camps on the eastern front small screening teams headed by lower ranking member of the Secret Police, Police Gestapo. These teams were assigned to the camp commanders and had the job to segregate the PWs who were candidates for execution according to the orders that had been given and to report them to office of the Secret Police. For that reason --"

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: Just a minute. This has to do with the eastern front?

DR. HEIM: Only with the eastern front.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: Was this witness on the eastern front?

THE WITNESS: Yes. I was.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: Will you give the period of time that he was there?

THE WITNESS: August, September, to the middle of October, 1941.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: A period of 2½ months?

THE WITNESS: Yes.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: What was his position there?

THE WITNESS: At that time I was SS"obersturmbann-

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fuehrer in the "Einsatzkommando" or Team 12.

DR. HEIM: I believe that the question which the Court just asked presents a wrong picture. This witness did not have anything to do with these commandoes or units when he was on the eastern from in 1941, but I blieve that the witness knows about this as far as it is concerned that he had the Action Zeppelin under him in Buchenwald.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: Imerely wanted to find out how much knowledge the witness had on the basis of his background, basis of his position, of the paragraph which has just been read.

DR. HEIM: The witness knew about this since he was assistante chief of the Action Zeppelin.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: Can we get on with the questions?

BY DR. HEIM:

Q. How did the commissions look that were active in the prisoner of war camps in the east?

A. They were not groups but they were commissions that did not have a permanent spot, camp, but visited various camps. It consisted of members of the Gestapo or secret police, criminal police, or the SD, depending on how they were sent to "Amt VI".

Q. Since the Prosecution claims that these units selected people especially of Asiatic background for executions, to support them and then to execute them, I would like to ask whether the Russians that were in these camps with Asiatic or Mongolian background were treated differently from these from the other parts of Russia?

A. No. They were treated exactly the same as the other members of the Action Zeppelin.

Q. Did it also happen that Russians who were selected for this decided not to go through with it during their training, and what happened to them?

A. The Russians were told that thei cooperation was completely voluntary, and they had the possibility at any time to retire. When they did retire they usually were sent to military units or used otherwise for work -- given work positions.

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Q. Did you ever hear anything of the "Kugelorder"?

A. Yes. I know of that order, with the exception of paragraph 3 which I cannot remember.

Q. Do you think or find it possible that persons selected for Action Zeppelin were regarded as such, which according to the "Kugelorder" were scheduled to be executed?

A. I did not have experience concerniig this. By time of "Kugelorder" in 1944 the Action Zeppelin was still existing.

Q. Do you find it possible that the small teams or "Einsatzkommandos" menti ned by Kurt Lindow in his sworn affodavit, that he considered these small teams for the Action Zeppelin as such execution teams?

A. Yes, I think that is very possible. The men of the Action Zeppeling acted in about the same way as described in the sworn affidavit of Lindow, and in addition to that, even in the Reich, there was difference of opinion, even in the country, in the Reich, as to what belonged to the Gestapo and what did not, because all members of the Reich Security Service wore the same uniforms and the same insignia. I was often regarded by the Russians in the prisoner of war camp as a Gestapo man and I had to right their opinions or change their opinions. After I read the indictment I asked many friends or comrades whether they knew about it, that Russian prisoners of war of certain racial groups or higher intelligence were selected to be executed. None of my comrades could give me an exact answer to this question. Many heard something about it, but nobody knew anything certain. Concerning the fact that intelligence people were executed, nobody knew anything.

COLONEL GRIFFITH-JONES: Nobody knew what?

THE INTERPRETER: Nobody knew anything.

CAPTAIN TURBIDY: Is that "intelligence" or "intelligent"?

THE INTERPRETER: "Intelligent". "t"

THE WITNESS: I personnaly have not found any witness for that. I always thought that due to my experience with Action Zeppelin I had better information about it, or knew more about it, and therefore, granted those rumors to be parlor stories

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BY DR. HEIM:

Q The Prosecution presented a document here, P.S. 3040, Exhibit U.S.A. 207. On page 43 concerning treatment of Russian prisoners of war --

COLONEL GRIFFITH JONES: In what book? Is it a decree?

DR. HEIM: Yes, it is an order of the High Command of the Army of the 24th of March 1942. Here it says in paragraph 9:

"For the separation of the Soviet prisoners of war and the civil population in these camps the following lines to be followed in addition to the separation according to nationality. Special to select are: Political unwanted officers; political not dangerous; and political especially dependable that can be used for the rebuilding of the occupied territories; while as far as possible the first separations according to number 9 should be taken care of by the camps, by the individual camps. There are special units for the separation of Soviet prisoners of war -- "

COLONEL GRIFFITH JONES: I have another one, a different document, and I think the wording is probably better.

DR. HEIM: "While this first separation concerning their political inclination, special "Einsatzkommandos" or teams have been created by the Security Police and Security Service, they are under the Chief of the Security Police and the SD, immediately under the Secret Police and the SD, and have been specially schooled for this special mission. They take their actions and -- their actions and questioning before these Russians are used in connection with the work or under the lines, guiding lines, of the Chief of the Security Police and the SD."

THE INTERPRETER: Will you read it back.

CAPTAIN TUERIDY: I think it is all right.

BY DR. HEIM:

Q I have concerning this document the following question: Could it be that the separation of Soviet prisoners of war mentioned in this document concerning the Action Zeppelin --

A I cannot say anything concerning it. I never saw a written order which concerned Action Zeppelin specifically.

M. MONNERAY: As far as I know, up to now the Prosecution has not

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brought any charge against this Zeppelin Action, and even in the documents presented by the Prosecution, as far as I know, at least, it is not talking at all about this Zeppelin Action. So I wonder whether they could tell anything interesting on this point, whether the questions put by the defense counsel are relevant.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: As to his last question I think the witness has indicated that he cannot connect the written -- was that a decree?

THE INTERPRETER: Yes.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: With the Action Zeppelin. If he has no knowledge I don't see how you can pursue this matter further.

DR. HEIM: In the documents concerning this separation the reasons for the separation have not been given. Therefore it is not only the possibility but the probability that these orders concerning the separation of prisoners were at least partly concerning this Action Zeppelin.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: I think the witness has indicated that he doesn't know whether this Action Zeppelin was connected with this decree.

DR. HEIM: But the witness did say that Kurt Lindow did mistake these special teams with the teams of Action Zeppelin.

M. MONNERAY: I do not think that Lindow in his affidavit talked about the Zeppelin Action at all.

DR. HEIM: But we never claimed that. But Lindow speaks concerning the separation and the witness also speaks concerning the separation; and the witness also speaks of a separation unit which seems to be the same thing as Lindow described in his sworn affidavit.

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CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: The witness has indicated he does not know that his work was connected with that field.

DR. HEIM: The prosecution states that these separations were only for the purpose of executions, or to select persons for execution, because he previously read document exhibit No. USA 207, and I have mentioned the reason for these separations. It is, therefore, possible that the Prosecution connects these separations with executions. What was the last question?

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: All right, let'shave the last question.

BY DR. HEIM:

Q Did the Gestapo, that is Amt IV of the Reich Security Office, have anything to do with the "Actions Zeppelin"?

A The only connection which Amt IV of the Gestapo had with this "Actions Zeppelin"? so far as I know is that some of the men of the Amt IV Gestapo were transferred through Amt I and Amt VI (Actions Zeppelin). That is sofar as I know the only connection.

DR. HEIM: Thank you very much.

COLONEL GRIFFITH JONES: I just want to clear up the confusion between your Zeppelin operation and the Einsatz commander.

CROSS EXAMINATION

BY COLONEL GRIFFITH JONES:

Q Your "Zeppelin Action" was an operation which was organized by Amt VI is that correct?

A Yes.

Q Did you know that operation of Einsatz commanders, about which Lindow spoke, was organizedby Amt IV?

A No, I did not know that.

Q Have you ever seen Lindow's affidavit?

A I only saw part of it. Shall I continue.

Q No. The fact that one operation isorganized by Amt VI, and the other operation by Amt IV, makesit perfectly clear there were two separate operations. Is that so?

A I do not know how Lindow knew that those commissions, which were in the camps -- in the prisoner war camps, were organized by Amt IV.

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Q Will you ask the witness to answer my question. The fact that the two operations were organized, which were completely separate departments of the RSHA, make it quite clear they were two independent operations, does it not'

A I cannot give any information about these. I only know the action accrued by Amt VI.

Q And Amt VI action had nothing to do with the screening of persons who were to be executed straight away?

A Yes, it had to do with the screening of persons, but not for screening of persons that were to be executed.

Q Have you ever been shown an order issued from Amt IV, and dated 17 July 1941, an order on the work which was to be carried out by Einsatz commanders in prisoner of war camps?

A I did not see this order, neither through my tour of duty, nor during my imprisonment.

Q From this Document PS-502 USA 486, I will read to you two passages: "It is the tasks of the commandos to investigate politically all inmates of the camp, their elimination and to give further treatment to the politically criminally, or in any other respect undesirable elements among them, all of those persons who could have utilized for the reconstruction of the occupied territories." Your Zeppelin groups never had any orders of that kind, did they?

A No, I did not see this order.

Q I read again, "Above all, the following must be discovered: All important functionaries of the State and the Party, especially professional revolutionists, functionaries of the Komintern, all authoritative party functionaries of the KPDSU, and its affiliated organizations, etc., all peoples-commissars and their deputies, all former political-commissars in the Red Army, the leading personalities of the central and middle regions, the leading personalities of the economic world, members of the Soviet-Russian intelligence, and all Jews." Did your Zeppelin groups ever have any orders like that; tell us what the Zeppelin groups had?

A So far as I know, no.

Q You have heard read paragraph 4 of Lindow's affidavit?

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A I do not know that paragraph.

Q I think it was read, and I believe it is part of the affidavit. I shall read paragraph 4 of Lindow's affidavit.

DR. HEIM: I read this paragraph.

BY COLONEL GRIFFITH JONES:

Q You heard the defense counsel say he read the paragraph from that affidavit.

A If the defense counsel read it, I heard it, yes.

Q Would you agree with me that the orders which were read to you are the same -- or appears to be exactly the same as those which Lindow is describing?

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A If that is Lindow's statement, yes. May I add something to that? What I know of Lindow's statement is as follows:

Q No. You heard the thing read, and you have agreed with me that what I have read to you out of the orders appeared to be the same as those that Lindow is describing. In view of the fact that the orders I read emanated from Amt IV, and the orders Lindow referred to emanated from Amt Iv, do you agree with me that he must have been referring to this order that I have read?

A (The Interpreter: Will you read that question)

Q In view of the fact that both the orders I have read, and the order that Lindow referred to emanated from Amt Iv, and the fact that both orders appeared to be the same at that time; would you agree with me that neither of them had anything to do with the Zeppelin operations that we have been describing?

A After the way this order read, yes.

Q And you will agree with me, therefore, that Lindow was describing some operation other than your Zeppelin operation?

A If Lindow said that the political independent and criminals were selected, then I agree with him.

DR. HEIM: That is all.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: Any questions to be asked?

COLONEL KAREN: I have.

BY COLONEL KAREN:

Q Was the witness only in the concentration camp of Buchenwald, or also other camps. If so, where and when?

A I was about two or three months before that for a sho leadership of a few hours in the concentration camp in Oranienburg

Q Does the witness know how the prisoners of war were treated in these camps, and about the orders concerning the treatment of these prisoners?

A I saw prisoners of war in these camps, they were Russian prisoners of war. These prisoners came from, sofar as I was told, from other prisoner of war camps, and were supposed to b nourished well for the purposes of using them later on as good wor

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kers. The orders of the prisoners of war camps concerning the treatment of the prisoners of war in those particular camps are not know to me.

Q (question in German)

A I did not understand the question.

Q Do you know only of the treatment of these Russian prisoners of war by the Gestapo that were selected for this secret work, or, do you know of the treatment by the Gestapo of the Russian prisoners of war that were not selected for the job, or, were just prisoners of war?

A In this case that we are speaking of now I only saw prisoners of war. Besides that I did not see any Gestapo agents in those camps with the exception of ourselves, who came there with that function.

COLONEL KAREN: If the witness can only talk or give information about the Russian prisoners that were selected only for espionage work, the Colonel does not have any further questions.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: There are no further questions?

DR. HEIMS: I have, sir.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: How many questions have you?

DR. HEIM: Only one question.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: Very well.

BY DR. HEIM:

Q Could Lindow say in the sworn affidavit at paragraph 4, or didn't he say that these commandos belonged to Amt IV of the Reich Security Service, but that they were members of the Secret Police Gestapo, therefore, if the Prosecution claims that Kurt Lindow was speaking of the Einsatz commandos of the units of Amt IV, so that that in my opinion is incorrect. I would like, therefore, to ask if these units of commandos named by Kurt Lindow, that they were mistaken by Kurt Lindow with the Einsatz commandos "action Zeppelin."

A If Kurt Lindow cannot give more detailed information about these units, about this commission, I'll have to answer this

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question with, yes.

DR. HEIM: That is all.

COLONEL GRIFFITH JONES: I cannot with your permission leave the matter there. The defense counsel knows perfectly well, if he has read the affidavit of Lindow, that in every preceding paragraph to paragraph 4, and paragraph 4 of the RSHA, and the very last sentence of paragraph 3, that is to say, the sentence immediately preceding paragraph 4 reading as follows: "The work concerning Russian prisoners of war must then have been done by Amt IVb 2A head of Department Amt IVb 2A was Reg. troop and Sturmbannfuehrer Hans Helmuit Wolf," and the affidavit immediately goes on and says, "There existed in the prisoner of war camps on the Eastern front small screening teams," and so on.

DR. HEIM: That in my opinion is purely a matter of view. The commissions that were active for "Actions Zeppelin" were not under Amt IV, but Amt VI, and these commissions were, as the witness has said, men of the criminal section of the Gestapo, as well as of the SD.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: That is all for this witness.

(A recess was taken)

The foregoing is a true and correct transcript of the testimony of Wilhelm Gruenwald, taken on 24 May 1946.

Howard F. Darrow
Reporter

Charles J. Gallagher
Reporter

CERTIFIED TO:

Joseph F. Tubridy
Commissioner

A. MARTIN-HAVARD
Commissioner